



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 3d CAVALRY REGIMENT  
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AFZC-RCO

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MEMORANDUM FOR THE REGIMENT OF MOUNTED RIFLEMEN

SUBJECT: 74<sup>th</sup> Colonel's Warfighting Philosophy ("How I Fight")

I am a cavalryman and my warfighting philosophy is predicated on seizing the initiative, attacking, exploiting success, and pursuing the enemy relentlessly until it is destroyed. We win on the offense. We gain and maintain the initiative, then attack: penetrate, exploit and pursue.

**Initiative** The most critical element in combat is initiative, forcing the enemy to react to your actions and preventing him from dictating the conditions at contact. During planning and execution all energy and focus must be on how to seize the initiative. If the initiative is temporarily lost, regaining the initiative is the commanders' and staffs' #1 priority.

**Operational adaptability** is essential to gaining and maintaining the initiative. Quickly adapting to a changing situation is how you maintain the initiative. My *Command Philosophy* published 16 November 2011 is the foundation for creating the environment to build the teams of adaptive leaders required to seize the initiative and successfully implement this Warfighting Philosophy.

**Combined Arms** Integration of combined arms and massing its effects at decisive points is the most effective way to overwhelm the enemy. Leverage combined arms integration in all planning. Leaders down to platoon level must be trained and confident in employing combined arms teams.

**Reconnaissance and Security** are the essential shaping operations in the fight for the initiative. Reconnaissance operations provide the intelligence required to make decisions that enable the execution of effective offensive and defensive operations. It answers PIR that drives decisions. Security operations protect the Regiment from surprise, prevent the enemy from seizing the initiative, and buy time and space for the Regiment to adapt and react to the evolving enemy situation.

**Fires.** The integration of fires (artillery, mortar, CCA, TUAS, CAS, Naval) into the ground maneuver plan is critical to massing effects at decisive points during combined arms maneuver.

**Air-Ground Integration.** Integrating the vertical maneuver dimension into the synchronized ground maneuver and fires plan is a key consideration when massing effects on the enemy.

**Offense** Whether conducting Combined Arms Maneuver (CAM) or Wide Area Security (WAS), victory can only be achieved through the offense. My approach to offensive operations is simple and based on combined arms doctrine of: Penetration, then rapidly transitioning to classic cavalry missions of: Exploitation and Pursuit.

**Penetration:** With the initiative, we choose the time and place to mass effects and achieve a point of penetration. On a linear battlefield in a CAM environment that may be a seam between two enemy units or a gap in the enemy's defense identified by the scouts. In a WAS environment, dealing with a networked insurgent group or guerrilla force, penetrating the network through HUMINT or capturing an IED maker who reveals intelligence during integration may be our point of penetration. Penetrate the enemy formation and rapidly exploit the initiative through violence of action.



**Exploitation.** Once a point of penetration is achieved the Regiment transitions to an exploitation. Exploitation allows us to maximize the initiative through rapid offensive action, while preventing the enemy the time and space to re-group, adapt, and regain the initiative.

**Pursuit.** Once the enemy is on the run, whether in retreat in CAM or a network unraveling in WAS, carry out a relentless pursuit to win decisively and DESTROY the enemy, rendering him incapable of ever reconstituting.

**Defense** I fight mobile defenses in depth that maximize deception operations to shape the battlefield. The Regiment, down to platoon level, must be experts at fighting the defense. We defend during transitions between offensive actions. During the defense we are vulnerable of losing the initiative. If the enemy attacks our defense, the way to maintain or regain the initiative is to execute a stonewall defensive operation preventing penetration by shaping the battlefield with integrated and synchronized enablers (EA development). Mass combined arms effects and kill the enemy in our engagement areas, defeating his attack and allowing us to regain the initiative and go back on the offense.

**Mission Command** Executing these forms of offensive and defensive operations requires junior leaders employing disciplined initiative within a clear commander's intent. Leaders must understand the mission and intent two-levels up, be comfortable in a decentralized operating environment, and be empowered to make rapid decisions when the opportunity to seize the initiative presents itself.

**Mission Command on the Move.** Combined arms maneuver over extended distances in austere environments require the battle staff to become mobile and develop systems allowing for mission command in a degraded mode or even analog conditions. These systems must provide the essential information required for commanders to make key decisions in the execution of this warfighting philosophy.

**R3R3-** Recon, Recon, Recon, then Rehearse, Rehearse, Rehearse. During TLP priorities of work, nothing is more important than leader's recons and rehearsals. Leader's recons greatly enhance the commander's visualization of the battlefield. Rehearsals are critical in confirming a common understanding of the commander's visualization while practicing the synchronization of the combined arms operation to support the commander's intent. During TLPs and the MDMP, do not short change these two critical events. These tasks give us the competitive advantage and increase our efforts to effectively seize the initiative.

Subordinate commanders and the Regimental Staff will use this Warfighting Philosophy as initial planning guidance in absence of further guidance and to enhance Leaders' and Troopers' understanding of how I approach warfighting across the range of military operations.

**Seize the initiative --- attack --- penetrate --- exploit --- pursue!**



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